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SWAMI PARAMANANDA

The Vigil

POEMS

BY

SWAMI PARAMANANDA

AUTHOR OF "SOUL'S SECRET DOOR,"
"REINCARNATION AND IMMORTALITY,"
"PATH OF DEVOTION," "SELF-MASTERY,"
"EMERSON AND VEDANTA," ETC.



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To Him

*The memory of Whose sacred life
Sheds light of hope and cheer upon
my lonely path
Even in the darkest hour of night.*

Preface

When "Soul's Secret Door," Swami Paramananda's first book of poems, was given to the public a foreword seemed only an impertinence, an intrusion into the communion of a soul with God. The pure beauty of these poems, their unsullied mysticism, their unique simplicity called for no commentary, and this is equally true of "The Vigil." It has the same Scriptural quality as the first volume, the same permeating spiritual atmosphere; but it has in addition a more sacred sense of intimacy, a more dynamic vitality, an ultimate profundity not to be analyzed but to be felt in the secret places of the heart.

Preface

Indeed, "The Vigil" springs from the first volume like a flower from its branch. Therefore, he who would enjoy its full flavor must know "Soul's Secret Door" which is an open door to the meaning of these later poems.

True poetry should have three beauties,—beauty of form, beauty of thought and beauty of spirit. Most of the poets do not go beyond beauty of thought, for the third or mystical beauty is possible only to the one who has experienced Divinity. When that realization comes and with it the power of expression, we have the inspired prophet, the singer of eternal songs. It is in this sense that the Swami's poems are Scriptural, for they contain the third beauty. This is not the opinion of one individual merely; from around the world simultaneously the judgment has

Preface

come. In the West with one voice critics far removed from each other have compared the poems of "Soul's Secret Door" to the Psalms of David and The Imitation of Christ. This is peculiarly significant, for in the Occident there is no conscious distinction made between the great poets and the saintly poets. In India it is otherwise. The Hindu heart may reverence the master of literature, but it has a special hallowed place set apart for those simple, illumined souls whose words spring as pure poetry from union with the Divine. "Now I sing only one song, the song that Thou has taught me." This song of the Swami's is an ever fresh song for it flows from that One Who maketh all things new. India understood. Once again she had given birth to a singer of the Spirit and with-

Preface

out hesitation she placed Swami Paramananda's name side by side with that of Kabir, Tulsi Das, Ram Prasad, Tukaram—the poet saints of India.

The fact that the Swami's poems should fulfill in this way the mystical ideals of both East and West would seem to be an answer to those who hold Eastern and Western mysticism to be divergent. Swami Paramananda proves by this intimate revelation that he has given us, the universality of true mysticism. It is the reaction of the human heart to God, and after a certain point of vision is reached all differences melt away. "The Vigil," the opening poem, from which the book takes its name, might have come from the lips of some rapt Christian mystic quite as well as from the heart of a Hindu devotee, as could "Pure Prayer," "Compassionate

Preface

Spirit," and many other poems in this rare volume.

Those who were privileged to be with the Swami during the writing of these poems, know how spontaneously they flowed from his soul. They came to him even as the Psalms must have come to David out under the stars, in tremendous aloofness of spirit with no thought of any ear that was to hear them save the ear of God. They came as pictures to the Swami, and when they were written down it was seldom that even a word or line had to be altered. It was as if a spring of inspiration had somehow been unsealed deep within his heart. Its flow has been continuous. Sometimes as many as six poems have come in a day. Often a poem would bring with it an exaltation of spirit that seemed to burn visibly within the

Preface

Swami, like a leaping flame. He had never written poems before, although he had long been a writer of poetic prose. This new gift came with the suddenness of revelation. What called it forth? By what power was this untried poet able to clothe his vision in such majestic rhythm, in such lovely form? Was it the light within his soul suddenly overflowing all barriers? Who can answer? When a flower is crushed it gives forth the soul of its fragrance, the essence of its being. This is all that we know: out of stress and pain and well-nigh crushing circumstances these poems were born. They are of the pure spirit; not a tinge of dogma mars any one of them. In both volumes devotion is the keynote, or what in India is called *Bhakti*,—the intense love of the soul for the Divine, taking voice as the

Preface

cry of the child for the Mother, of the lover for the Beloved; but in "The Vigil" this is blended with the tremendous note of monism which is and must always be the undertone in all yearning for God. A single poem, a line even, read with an understanding heart is equal to a meditation. It stays with one in one's hours of work, calming, strengthening, vivifying, giving as a critic said, an almost tonic sense of repose.

That which girds the spirit to action, that which stabilizes the soul can never be pushed aside as empty dreams,—a mere Oriental negation of life. Swami Paramananda's mysticism is that practical mysticism which contains in it the healing of the nations. It is vibrant with power. Many of his poems are like bugle-calls, while the closing poem,

Preface

“The March of Life,” has been well termed a spiritual Marseillaise. In it the voice of the active West meets and mingles with the deep call of ancient India to the souls of men: “Arise! Awake! Having found the Great Ones, gain understanding.”

DAYA.

Boston, December, 1923.

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THE VIGIL



IN THE glow of my sacred
lamp
I caught a glimpse of Thy
countenance,
Which hath roused in me an all-con-
suming longing to see Thee again.
I keep vigil,—
My altar-light burns day and night
with the hope of Thy coming.
I know in my inmost depth that no
mortal light can reveal Thy im-
mortal face;
Thou art seen only in Thine own efful-
gence.
Yet with yearning hope in my heart,
I keep my little altar-lamp
Day and night, burning—burning!

WHO ART THOU?



AN or woman art Thou, I
know not;

Child or grown art Thou, I
know not;

Matter or Spirit art Thou, I know not.
Art Thou in air or ether, in fire or
water?

Hast Thou a form or art Thou form-
less?

Art Thou finite?

Art Thou infinite?

I know not Thy vastness,

Nay, I crave not such knowledge.

This only I know through Thy grace,
That Thou art my all, —

Yea, my all-in-all.

WHAT I AM



AM the Spirit of eternal
youth.

I am form in infinite space.

I am unchanging beauty.

I am undying life.

Endless time am I.

I am order in chaos.

I am lull in the storm.

I am fury of the wind.

I am calm of the deep.

I am flash of the lightning.

I am dark of the wild.

I am crash of the thunder.

I am stillness of the night.

Perfume of the flowers am I.

Majesty of the mountains am I.

The quiet solitude of thy soul is **my**
home.

The peace of thy heart is my rest.

VOICE OF INFINITE



IT IS not the wind alone that
 speaketh to our ears;
It is the voice of the Infinite
 that speaketh to our soul
with many tongues.

The Infinite speaketh to us through
 earth and water, rock and river,
 beast and bird, tree and flower:
Through all—through all!
At dawn It speaketh to our soul
Through the rays of the rising sun.

POOR PILGRIM



IN THE lonely trail of my
life as I walk alone
How oft I feel distressed and
desolate.

Stranded and helpless I look for my
course.

Only the trailing light of Thy garment
ever leads me on to follow Thee.

Alas, I follow Thee but with frail and
faltering feet.

Wilt Thou not show me mercy,

Thou Friend of the lowly,

And halt Thy march a little moment?

Have pity on this poor pilgrim

And let him once worship Thy holy
feet.

NOISELESS TREAD



ONE can hear His footsteps
save those whose sanc-
tuary-door is open;
His noiseless tread is heard only by
those whose outer ears are closed.

SILENT WHISPER



ORD, I called unto Thee in
agony of soul, but Thou
didst not hear me.

I sought Thee with heavy
heart, but Thou didst not come.

My child, I came, but thine eyes were
blinded by grief;

Thou couldst not see me.

And thy heart was senseless with sor-
row;

Hence thou couldst not feel my touch.

I am always near thee.

Thou needst never call me aloud,

I hear the silent whisper of thy soul.

THE VEIL OF UNKNOWING



IT IS not death that robs our
life,

Nor is it the dark of night
that bars our inward
sight;

Nay, it is the Veil of Unknowing.

Behold how the sky of our fair heart is
darkened by the rising mist of
jealousy and anger, suspicion and
doubt.

These Powers of blackness by their
quick alliance, form this Veil of
Unknowing.

Shall we not keep the sky of our heart
clear and fair like the polished
mirror, to reflect the truer image
of our inmost soul?

The Vigil

One speck of this doubting dust lodged
on our heart, draws another and
yet another

Till no longer our vision is true.

We pray unto Thee, Thou Destroyer
of darkness,

Help us to keep our heart pure, clear
and free from this Veil of Un-
knowing.

DOUBT



ET thee gone, thou foul disease of mind!

Doubt is thy name, thou dweller in darkness.

Pestilent thoughts are thy creation.

Thou dost cloud our mind and by
strange distortion hide our soul's
effulgent light.

Depart from me!

Thou potent illusion, get thee hence!
I defy thee with all the power of my
soul.

KINGDOM OF PURE THOUGHT



UR thoughts lift us up to
vision's lofty heights,
Where we stand upright and
strong,
As if out of evil's ominous reach.
Then again our own thoughts,
Blinding our mind by false persuasion,
Lead us downward to a narrower
sphere,
Enchaining us to a world of endless
conflict.
Here we struggle, carrying heavy loads,
And our dejected hearts bend down
with broken faith.
Greed, ambition, self-love and pride
drag us on through this mire of
ignorance.

[continued]

The Vigil

“Help us! Help us!” we cry in agony
of soul,

“Give us again our lost kingdom of
pure thought;

“Restore unto us our peace.

“We ask no more for the vanities of
this world.

“Master of Fate! O Lord of Light!

“Save us! Save us!

“With helpless heart we pray unto
Thee.”

THINK NOT OF SELF



THINK not of self,
But let thy love encompass
other hearts.
True love hath no boundary
lines;
Like the infinite sky it covers all space.

THY HAND OF MERCY



HIS, my house, grows dark
and cold when Thou art
absent from it.

The light of my soul is lus-
terless without Thee;
The pulse of my life is silent
When Thou, Life of my life, art not in
my dwelling.
I pray unto Thee with all the powers
Thou hast bestowed upon me,
That Thou wilt never abandon me.
I know now that in storm or calm, in
light or dark,
The passage of my life without Thee is
ever fraught with danger.
I need Thy hand of mercy to guide
me every hour of day and night.

BE STILL



DIDST thou not come naked
from thy mother's
womb?

Didst thou not have thy soul
in safety even before thy body's
birth?

Why art thou then fretful and anxious?

One Who watched over thee then,
watches over thee now;

One Who loved thee then, loves thee
now.

My mind remember this and be still.

SWEET BLOSSOM OF PEACE



MID chaos Thou dost create
divine beauty;

Amid dire disorder Thou
dost plant the seed of
harmony that beareth the sweet
blossom of peace.

Verily Thou art the Master of miracle!
Thy approach filleth our soul with light
of gladness.

Where Thou dwellest the gloom of
darkness can never be.

Thou art the perpetual sun that feed-
eth my soul with ever fresh life.

SPEECH IS POWERLESS



HAT I feel now I cannot say;
The words are not yet made
for its utterance.

Speech is powerless to speak
of That which hath given it power
to speak.

Thus it is, friend, so oft I keep silent
when thou wouldst have me speak.

CHOIR-MASTER



ONDROUS Choir-master of
the great universe!

I want to keep my gaze fixed
on Thee.

Whene'er my eyes are turned away
from Thee, I fall out of rhythm.
My song apart from Thee lacks har-
mony—

Help me to keep my gaze fixed on Thee
now and always.

THE COSMIC DRUM



WHEN all is still
I hear Thee speak;
When all nature blends in
harmony, I hear Thee
sing.

Thy music, pulsating the heart of the
universe, is ever sounding its
rhythmic drum;

But lo! how deaf are our ears!
Only now and then we catch its roll
And our feet fall with its beat.

SOUL OF MY SONG



WHEN I brought Thee my
broken *vina* it was un-
strung and dumb:
Music had it none,—
Discordant and harsh were the sounds
in its desolate heart.
Now I know not whether this be the
same that was once broken and
mute,
Or a new one Thou hast given me to
finish my life's unfinished song.
It is renewed and refreshed;
It is revived by the touch of Thy hand.
The touch of Thy hand is ever fresh
life.
Heart of my *vina*, its voice and music
art Thou;
Verily Thou art the Soul of my song.

MY LIFE'S FULFILLMENT



Y LIFE'S broken harmony is
restored,
The unfinished song is complete

Since I have found my place at Thy
sacred feet.

Thy beckoning hath saved me from
falling into the snare of deception;
Contact with Thy holy being hath re-
filled my ebbing life.

Verily Thou art my life's fulfillment;
The cause of my joy and sorrow, laugh-
ter and grief;

My soul's sunshine and heart's rain-
cloud.

[continued]

The Vigil

I have nothing apart from Thee;
I am nothing apart from Thee;
I want nothing other than Thee.
Wilt Thou not stay with me who am
so dependent on Thee?
Wilt Thou not take me who have no
other than Thee?

AS PERFUME IN FLOWER



ART Thou in me or am I in
Thee?

At times I feel that Thou
art in me as perfume in

flower,—

Subtle, imperceptible, yet most real.

Again, in my inmost thought I see
Thee as vast,

Pervading like the infinite sky.

Then I know that my little life is like
an ocean drop contained in Thy
boundless Self.

DESTINY



DESTINY, I have followed
Thy irresistible call
Through mountains' rocky
trails and forests' thorny
paths;
I have trod deserts' burning sands and
orchards' cooling shades.
Thou hast led me through fortune's
bright ascending flights
And misfortune's uttermost depths.
I have drunk life's bitterest and sweet-
est cups,—
All at Thy bidding.
Through Thy mysterious guiding I
have known heaven's luminous
stars shedding their unfailing
lustre;

The Vigil

Also have I wandered through misery's
blackest night.

Oft my unbending mind, ignorant of
Thy beneficent Will, hath rebelled
and recoiled;

But Thou, with unshakable resolution
of transforming and up-building,
Hast fitted me for my life.

REST WILL COME



FEAR not, my heart,
even the darkest night
must end at dawn!

Clouds and mist may come
and go

But they cannot rob sun's radiant glow.
Look up, mine eyes, keep steady watch,
For never must ye lose your guiding
star.

Hold fast! Hold fast!

Faith and courage are His tender bless-
ings;

He will not hold these from thee when
He sees thy yearning, struggling
soul.

Rest will come when thy toil is done.

BLESSED PAIN



AIN, Thou art always at
work;

Thy hand is ever active, finishing our life's unfinished structure.

Thou art like a Master-builder, trimming with Thy sharp adamantine tool.

Oft in our ignorance and childish fear
we weep and groan;

But I know that Thou art my true and
blessed friend.

Thy chisel hath shorn me of my self-delusion.

WOUND OF SEPARATION



THE wound of separation from
Thee remains ever fresh
in my heart.

I pray not for its healing;
Its sacred pain doth sanctify my life
every hour.

Thou art my unfailing blessing.
Thou hast blessed me by Thy coming;
Thou hast blessed me by Thy staying,
And now Thou dost bless me by Thy
going.

WORDLESS ECSTASY



NCE I was a rebel and abhorred all subjection, even unto Thee, my Lord!

My haughty heart would not bend.
Now I smile to think with what whole-souled surrender I lie at Thy blessed feet.

Verily Thou art a transformer!
Thine unseen touch changes our blemish into beauty,
Our emptiness into fullness,
Our life's harshness into sweet tenderness.

The marvel of Thine infinite majesty
Fills my heart with wordless ecstasy.

ALL-CONQUERING LOVE



LORY to Thy all-conquering
love!


Yea, Thy love is my armor,
My impenetrable shield,
My unfailing safe-guard.

I bathe in Thy love and am refreshed;
I feed on Thy love and my soul-hunger
is appeased.

What need have I of aught else
When Thou dost fill me and surround
me

With Thy inexhaustible and all-filling
love?

BELOVED GUIDE

ELOVED Guide, my soul's
Safe-keeper,
Thy firm but gentle hand of
wisdom hath saved me
from falling over the precipice of
life many, many times.
In my childish whims how oft have I
disregarded Thy pleadings and
warnings,
Yet Thy tender love and unchanging
patience have ever shielded me.
Oft my own hope and courage abandon
me,
But Thou dost never forsake me.
Thou hast given me all ; yea, more than
this small vessel of mine can hold.
Naught have I to offer Thee save this
unworthy life
Which is already Thine.

LIGHT OF HOPE



WAITING for Thee, my Love,
my Life, Soul of my
life!

Many hours of day and night
have passed me by,
Yet faith kindles my hope and in the
light of hope I see Thy approach
even in dense dark of night.
I shall wait for Thee now
And let me wait for Thee always!

SWEET COMFORTER



SWEET Comforter, my soul's
abiding shelter,
Thou hast saved me by Thy
look of boundless com-
passion.

Thy smile hath gladdened my whole
being;

Touch of Thy hand hath filled me with
strength;

Glance of Thine eyes hath given me
new sight of hope;

Fragrance of Thy being hath awakened
in me pure love.

Verily Thou art the breath of my life,
Strength of my limbs,
Solace of my soul!

WING OF THOUGHT



SAILED on the wing of
thought, crossing many
deep streams where my
feet would have sunk in
weight.

But the wing of thought carried me to
the unwonted shores of life where
I found Thee,

And in Thee I found my rest.

Soul in search is never at rest.

Soul in slumber knoweth not the pre-
cious peace.

Soul in wakeful communion is at rest
and hath found its peace.

TREE OF SHELTER



RIVEN by the storm of life
I have come to Thee,
Thou eternal Tree of
shelter!

As I sit under Thy protecting boughs
My storm-pressed heart sighs with re-
lief.

Thou hast given me my long-lost peace.

A LITTLE BOON



ERT Thou always so near
and I hunted for Thee
so far?

Verily when I ran out to find
Thee I was going away from Thee.
Faith have I none in my own wisdom
or vision.

Since Thou hast come of Thine own
great compassion for me, who am
devoid of all merit,
Wilt Thou not vouchsafe a little boon
to me?

Then place Thy saving hand upon mine
eyes and cure me of my blindness
That it may never again hide Thee
from me.

REALIZATION



HERE have I seen this face?
I thought and thought, and
thought yet again,
Trying in vain to join the
fragments of my life's broken
memories.

I looked with my mind's searching eyes
both far and near;
But, alas! with no avail.
This strange knowing and not knowing
kept me stirred day and night with
fever of longing.

"Be still! Strain thou thy mind no
more," spake a voice from an un-
seen depth:

"Close thine eyes, they see not the true;
come thou with me."

[continued]

The Vigil

Thus a gentle hand led me to a noise-
less land.

Its cooling scented breeze soothed all
my inner anguish.

Lo! I stood before a crystal lake
In whose limpid waters I saw—and I
knew.

MY ONLY DESIRE



IN THE soft light of sanctity,
As I behold Thy transparent form of divine loveliness,
My lowly heart is filled with unspeakable gladness.
Thou art the maker of this life, the giver of my sight.
Once I was ignorant of all this and sought happiness apart from Thee;
But now Thou knowest my only desire.

LOOK NOT BACK



IN THE clamour of the market-place of life I heard
a Voice call me aside:

“What thou seekest, child,
is not here, it is not found in the
crowd.

“Hast thou courage to travel alone yon
invisible path?

“Then carry this lamp in thy hand and
walk with steadfast gaze —

“Look not back: the past will melt in
the dark —

“Follow, follow, follow on by its glow.”

SELF-LUMINOUS



VERILY, Thou art self-luminous, — all is lighted up by Thy Presence!

The luminaries find their
lustre in Thee;
The paths of my inner and outer life
lie clear before me;
I need no other light to find my way
out to Thee.
I shall carry no light save one — the
lamp of Thy grace.
This I can never part with;
I see by its white radiance, even when
mine eyes are closed.

BE NOT A PUPPET



BE NOT a puppet in ambition's
hand, beaten and buffeted!

Wouldst thou be enticed and
enslaved by a ruthless tyrant?
Should a child of Eternity stoop so low?
Nay, be not trapped or befooled by the
seeming.

Verily thou art ever free,
An heir to eternal and omniscient Life.

MAGIC WAND



IF THOU wouldst have divine
 grace,
Then crave not the favour
 of man.

If thou wouldst soar heaven's loftiest
 heights,

Then let not thy feet be chained to
 earth.

Bear no malice or envy in thy mind,
For these are heavy loads to carry.
He lifts those by His magic wand
Who come free of heart and hand.

PERFUME OF THOUGHT



NOBLE thoughts are like sweet
perfume,
Ever refreshing to our mind
and heart,
While impure thoughts rise as noxious
vapors to poison our soul and para-
lyze our mind's truer sense.
Pure thought is more precious far than
all the diamonds and the rubies of
this world;
For it brightens our inner life
And sheds upon us its precious peace.

COMPASSIONATE SPIRIT



COMPASSIONATE Spirit,
guide our steps!

Do not let us blunder or be
led by our self-will.

We know not how to follow nor what
to follow amid these our life's end-
less ways.

All our resolutions are but brittle de-
ceptions

Save when Thou givest us Thy tender
hand of safety.

Knowing this in my heart of hearts,

I shall banish all unrest of mind,

And wait here at Thy door in peace and
gladness.

AWAITING THEE



OW long I waited for Thee I
cannot say,
For time was not in my
thought.

When I watch for Thee my mind is
merged in Thee.

Time exists not for me when Thou art
near.

I see naught else but Thee;

I feel naught else but Thee;

I crave no other knowledge.

I only know that Thou art mine,

And I am forever Thine.

SELF-OBLIVION



WHEN Thou art near me, time
puts on wings and flies
speedily ;

Space melts into nothingness
and my life's cares are forgot.

Yea, Thou hast thrown a magic aura
around me—

I forget myself so wholly when I am
near Thee.

Oh, how my soul delights in this total
self-oblivion !

SORROWLESS LAND



HE blessing of Thy smile hath
filled my soul with radi-
ant joy.

When I am in Thy Presence my heart
is always light and my feet do not
touch the ground.

Verily, Thou hast transported me to a
sorrowless land!

RHYTHMIC DANCE



LAYMATE of my soul, once
Thou didst teach me a
dance

And we both clapped our
hands with a joyous song in our
hearts.

To-day my whole life floats in its
rhythm

And my body sways with its beat.

SUBSTANCE OF ALL



BRILLIANCE of the sun art
Thou;
Veil of the twilight art Thou;
Heat of the fire art Thou.

Coolness of the earth Thou art;
Lustre of the moon Thou art;
Mystery of the dark Thou art.

Thou art the fragrance of the flower,
Sweet taste of water,
Life-breath of air;—
Verily Thou art the essence and substance of all!

LIFE-PLANT



THOU art the root of this life-plant.

Not knowing the secret of its being,

It lifted its head to the light,
Spreading its limbs in space
As if eager for flight.

But earth held it firm to its root

While sun, rain and air,
By their unfailing care,
Brought it to ripening.

Lo, now, how it bends its head with
fruition,

As if in grateful submission.

WHEN THY HEART IS RIPE

Child



HY, Mother! Hast thou been
here long?

Mother

Not long, my child,—but for
a few passing hours of night.

Child

Why didst thou not call me, Mother?
I am so sad all these hours are lost.

Mother

Not only now but oft I sit by thee when
thou dreamest thy fancies and
seest me not.

The Vigil

I do not wake thee from thy slumber-
ing, but only watch thee with my
eye of love.

Sweet child, when thy heart is ripe, thou
wilt know there is no waste of time
either waiting or watching for love.

LOVE IS LIFE



LOVE is a divine essence.

Its inbreathing is life.

What is opposed to love is
enemy of life.

Those who love truly, they live;

For love abounds in unending life.

Live and love!

Love and live!

Where love reigns death can never be.

Love is mother of both joy and peace;

From that heart where love always lives
peace and joy will never part.

LET THY HEART BLOSSOM



EASON of blossoming is the
time of love.

Heart of the bud bursts with
the fullness of its love.

The flower speaketh its inmost heart by
giving us its fragrance.

Let thy heart, like the flower, blossom
with love

And give to the world peace perpetual
and abiding joy.

ALTAR—FLOWER



ALTAR-flower, I have watched
thee with deepest wonderment.

Thou fragrant beauty of delicate loveliness,
Thou hast given thine all!
Now thou art fading.
Art thou dead?
Nay, thou art risen to thy glory,—
Thou art ascended!
Thy immortal soul of sweet perfume
Hath risen to the throne of thy Lord;
Thou art no more separate from Him.
Thy humble heart hath taught me a
holy secret,—
Yea, thou hast given thine all!

IN QUEST



FOR have I travelled,
Long have I struggled,
Following the impulse of my
restless will.

Seeking! Seeking! Seeking!
In quest of happiness I sought through
life's mansion, going from chamber
to chamber;

But happiness I found not there.
I found happiness nowhere till my
self-will was lost in His Will.

Now I have no will of mine,
Nor do I want my will again.

His Will is my will
And my will is His.
In His Will is my delight;
His Presence is my peace.

ONLY A THOUGHT



MASTER Ferry-man, Thou
hast saved this desperate
and helpless wayfarer
From drowning in the black waters of
misery.

OCEAN OF LOVE



AST off from thy mind all
base thoughts, and
plunge—plunge in the
ocean of love!

Fear not drowning nor death,—

Love is life.

Yea, it is eternal and endless bliss.

COMPANION OF MY LIFE



OMPANION of my life,
Before I found Thee I was
an aimless wanderer,
Roaming alone like a wanton
child.

Thy divine beauty hath tamed my rest-
less mind;

Thou hast shielded me by Thy protect-
ing love.

Now I depend on Thee, nay, I cannot
live without Thee.

I crave no other blessing than Thy be-
nign Presence.

JOY OF MY SOUL



WHEN Thou art near, I feel
strong and my heart
sings a happy song.

When I lose Thee, all my
strength fails me and darkness en-
shrouds my heart.

Lamp of my life,
Joy of my soul,
Vigor of my spirit art Thou!

SOLACE



NOT knowing the ways of this
strange world,
As I journeyed alone, self-
dependent,
My heart was wounded and my body
was torn.
But Thy tender touch of brooding love
hath revived me.
Thou hast made my wounded heart
Thy throne;
Thou hast transformed my pain into
sweet solace.

LIFT ME AND LEAD ME



TAKE my hand and lift me to
that plane where abide
harmony and unbroken
union with Thee.

I was not ready when Thou didst give
me Thy hand of mercy ;

Now I come ready to follow Thee.

Lift me and lead me !

I will follow Thee ;

I will not look back nor fear.

UNFADING FLOWERS



ANOTHER wreath have I
made of the blossoms
that were showered upon
me at Thy coming.

These unearthly and unfading flowers
ever fill my hands anew,

For they are endless.

Their delicate beauty hath captured my
gaze ;

Their sweet fragrance hath so filled my
life that I am distracted day and
night.

The charm of the world is broken !

THE ARTIST



ARE the clouds paintings of
God?

Who knows?

They are what they are,
Untouched by man's imagination.
Man can paint pictures on canvas,
But God alone can put color on the sky.

MYSTIC REALM OF LIGHT



GOOD deeds and misdeeds are
like the white and dusky
clouds:

One reflects the Sun of
Truth, the other veils Its face.
But there is a hidden, inner course: a
clear cloudless sky.
It is the Spirit's Way,—
The mystic realm of light.
Here good and ill, pleasure and pain
And all the conflict of dual life,
Fade before the constant sun—
This Sun of Truth, life of the mystic
soul,
His unending joy
And unfailing peace!

SONG OF DAWN



IT IS dawn; it is dawn!
“Behold the glory of morn!
“Stay thou no more slumbering,—
ering,—
“The dark of night is gone.
“It is dawn; it is dawn!
“Stay thou no more slumbering,—
“The veil of night is torn;
“The dark of night is gone.
“It is dawn, lovely dawn!
“Behold the glory of morn!
“Stay thou no more slumbering,—
“The mist of night is gone;
“The dark of night is gone;
“The veil of night is torn.
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[*continued*]

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[*continued*]

The Vigil

Thus the voice of air sang at early
dawn.

The ear heard the call, but the eyes
paid no heed and closed their lids;
Body and mind sank to sleep again.

Do not miss the call of the Awakener,—
Arise and inhale the life-breath of
morn!

AWAKENER



WAKENER, Thy robe of
many hues

Hath transformed the dull
sky into a lustre of love-

liness.

I never tire of Thy wondrous light;

I am never sated by Thy ever-fresh
beauty.

HOLY SCRIPT



LET me read this holy script
without the glare of
mortal light,
For I see its subtle beauty
more vividly by soul's softer glow.
Let me sing this unaccompanied by all
other instruments of music,
For I can follow better the one un-
mingled note.

LIGHT



HE light that I see yonder
And the light that shineth
near
Is but the same light.
It is soul's light;
It is God's light;
It is the light of love.
This lamp of life may burn dim or it
may burn bright;
But ever is it undying in dying!

SYMPHONY OF LIFE



IN THIS great symphony of
life

Where all is melody and
music, save the voice of

ego,

Sing, my soul, in harmony!

Pay no heed to voice of ego;

It is false, yea, and always out of tune.

Sing thou after the Beloved's voice!

It is divine harmony;

It is sweet melody

And it is perpetual peace.

HIDE AND SEEK



OW long wilt Thou play this
game of hide and seek?
May we not play another
that keeps us always to-
gether?

When I hold Thy hand and look on
Thy smiling face
My heart is filled with childish confi-
dence

And I think that Thou couldst never
hide from me again.

When Thou dost hide from me,
I am powerless to find Thee.

THE INNER EYE



WHEN Thou dost stand behind
me, my whole being is
vibrant with strength;
Life's upheavals vanish and
world's onslaughts touch me not.
Teach me how I may keep Thee with
me always.

I am ever with thee, but thou knowest
it not.

Thou dost not look towards me with thy
inner eye.

HOLY SANCTUARY



IN SOLITUDE'S inmost still-
ness there is a sacred
shrine.

Divine harmony sings there;
Peace perpetual reigns there;
Pure gladness shines there;
Sweet fragrance permeates the air.
But none can find access to this holy
sanctuary
Whose inner eyes are closed;
Nor can one enter there
Whose footsteps are heavy and hard.

LONELINESS



WHAT makes thee so lonely,
friend?
One is always lonely in the
crowd: yea, and more
lonely alone, with thought of self.
But when one's thought is lost in the
Beloved,
One is never lonely in crowd or alone.

THOU ART MY PURE PRAYER



IN THIS hour of meditation I
lift my whole heart to
Thee.

Fill it, my Lord, else I dwell
in emptiness!

Charge me with yearning thought;
Let my heart be filled with Thy all-
absorbing love;

Let there be no vacant space in me
where Thy love hath not entered.

My Lord, my Love!

Thus I pray unto Thee with holy joy
and ecstasy,

Knowing that Thou enterest my soul as
pure prayer.

SACRED WATER



THY blessing of protecting
love
Ever riseth up in my heart
Like an unfailing spring.
I am washed, cleansed and made alive
anew
By its sacred water.

THOU AND THINE



I WAS I who came to Thee
seeking for shelter and
begging sweet fruits
from my life's barren
tree.

But lo! what hath chanced since Thou
didst cast upon me Thy merciful
glance and fill me with Thy divine
being?

Naught is left of me, or what I thought
was "I";

What remains of me is Thou and Thine.
The thought of self and "I", my desires
and prayers, are all lost in Thee.

DRINK MY SOUL



RINK, my soul! from life's
perpetual spring
Where eternity flows in
rhythmic current;
Where finite and infinite play in unison
their game of harmony.

SUN AND TWILIGHT

Twilight



WORD of my light,
I wait with eager heart
All day and night
For this blessed moment.

Sun

Gentle maiden, herald of evening and
morn,
Behold how the sky lauds thy approach!
How all nature breathes stillness at thy
coming!

Twilight

I am only Thy shadow;
Thou art the soul of my life,—my pos-
sessor!

[continued]

The Vigil

I go before Thee and behind Thee, at
Thy will.

Thou wouldst not leave Thine own
shadow?

Sun

Fair Radiance of Heaven,
Thou dost carry in thy bosom
The healing balm of dawn
And the blessing of the night.
I can never leave thee,
For, verily, thou art a part of me!

SILENT COMMUNION



IN THE hour of silent communion
I taste sweet ecstasy of bliss.
Thou art the light of my soul,
This body is only its shade.

MARVEL OF ENCHANTMENT



MASTER Artist, Thou hast adorned the sky with the color of living and translucent flame.

I cannot turn my eyes away from Thy glowing picture, painted on the background of setting-sun.

Let me look again, ere the curtain of night hides this marvel of enchantment from my sight.

SPEAK TO MY HUNGRY EAR



PEAK to me now in this hour
of aloofness!

My soul cries out to Thee.

Wilt Thou not hear me and
speak to my hungry ear? * * *

Thy voice of love hath melted my life
into sweet harmony;

Thy holy compassion hath filled my
heart with endless song.

My soul breathes now in peace and
music.

ANYTHING OR NOTHING



ANYTHING or nothing,—I
am content if it be Thy
Will.

When Thou dost dwell in my
heart I feel no lack of things of
this world.

Only one thing I ask of Thee:
That Thou dost abide with me always
and evermore.

THOU ART MY SOUL



AM Thy soil,
Thou art my seed.
I am Thy body,
Thou art my soul.

SUPPLICATION



WHEN Thou dost withdraw
from me, my heart
grows faint with fear
and loneliness.

Without Thy grace my life is an empty
vessel that I carry day and night.

What joy have I when Thou, Source of
my joy, art far from me?

What peace can I have when Thy ab-
sence rends my soul with anguish?

Bounty of this world only makes my
heavy heart heavier.

Now I pray unto Thee with my naked
soul,—hiding nothing from Thee,—

That Thou dost show me Thy tender
mercy

And abide with me ever and forever.

MAN OF VISION



MAN of vision, stand firm!
Hold fast to thy faith!
These blinking lights that
come at the dark hours
of night,
These thick clouds that gather round
the sun to veil its face,
Are but passing phantoms.
They are unreal—fleeting illusions to
distract our minds from high vision.
Be thou steadfast, unwavering like yon
mountain.
The light above, that once shed its
glow upon thy path,
Is yet watching over thee from beyond
the clouds.
Stand firm in faith:—and never lower
thy gaze!

CANDLE OF LIFE



THE dark walls of night stood
before me as if in grim
defiance, barring my
vision.

I searched for light but the face of the
dark was ever before me.

“Light! Light! My soul cries for
light!

“Help me to find the light!”

“The light is behind thee;

“When thou dost turn thy face it will
shine before thee.

“This light,—the ever-burning candle
of life,—was always with thee;

“But the phantoms of illusion blinded
thine eyes.

The Vigil

“They are gone now—gone to nothing;
for they are nothing.

“Nothing at all but dreams are these.”

My soul, be thou vigilant!

Keep constant watch o’er this ever-
burning candle of life.

FLAME OF FAITH



IT IS the flame of faith that
sheds light upon our
life's straight and nar-
row path.

Faith, how oft thou dost come to my
rescue as I stand in the dark cor-
ners of life, puzzled and helpless.

O blessed Faith, thy transcendent glow
hath filled my life!

Thy lustre hath brought me new sight.
I shall walk now with the light of thy
holy sanctity.

THE MARCH OF LIFE



ONWARD ever forward in the
march of life,—
My soul, onward, ever forward,
March on!

Perchance the flame of thy life burns
dim

Or flickers in the wind of this world.

Fear not its extinction.

Hold fast with all thy faith.

No power in gale or storm,

Nay, naught in heaven or earth,

Can rob thee of thine immortal flame.

It is assigned thee by Eternal Hand.

It is thine forever, at all times,

With no beginning or end.

When thy feet are tired, rest them.

If mind is weary, refresh it.

[*continued*]

The Vigil

Pause awhile in the still peace of thy
 inmost cave;
Then rise again with renewed spirit of
 faith, hope and courage.
Onward, ever forward in the march of
 life,—
Ever onward, ever forward, my soul,
 March on! March on!

